

Q4 PARTNER UPDATE

CONCERNS REMAIN ON ENERGY POLICY

Legislation calling for a 100% clean energy standard in the state of Michigan was signed in November by Gov. Whitmer.

The Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance, in collaboration with the Coalition for Clean and Renewable Energy (CCARE), advocated for changes to support sensible, clean energy initiatives. The objective is to safeguard the environment, keep energy rates low, and maintain reliability without compromising affordability, especially for small business owners, including manufacturers.

As current energy policy reforms set ambitious goals, strong concerns remain within the business community in northern Michigan and across the state. While we agree with the ultimate aim to achieve 100% clean energy, it is crucial to establish feasible goals for electric companies and cooperatives.

The Northern Michigan Chamber Alliance anticipates ongoing discussions and remains committed to ensuring that the voice of the business community in Northern Michigan is emphatically heard in the next phase of this process.

WELCOME, INVESTUP!

The Alliance is proud to announce our newest Supporting Partner, InvestUP!



InvestUP is the lead regional economic organization for the Upper Peninsula. Their mission is to drive prosperity across the Upper Peninsula.

The NMCA has already worked effectively with InvestUP on many fronts, including the establishment and funding of the Office of Rural Prosperity and involvement with the Jobs, Talent, and People workgroup on the Growing Michigan Together Council. We look forward to continued success through a strengthened partnership.

ALLIANCE JOINS LIQUOR CONTROL COMMISSION FIELD HEARING

In October, the Alliance attended a Liquor Control Commission field hearing at Chateau Chantal in Traverse City. After the meeting, NMCA Government Relations Director Henry Wolf had the chance to meet the commissioners and discuss the shared goal of business growth and prosperity for the hospitality industry in northern Michigan. We appreciate the accessibility and transparency offered by the commissioners.

OCTOBER FIELD HEARING VISIT TO CHATEAU CHANTAL

Nate Love - Michigan Wine Producers Association

Henry Wolf - Traverse Connect and NMCA

Hoon-Yung Hopgood - MLCC Administrative Commissioner

Sara Weber - MLCC Licensing Director

Dennis Olshove - MLCC Administrative Commissioner

Rachelle Breeden - MLCC Deputy Director of Finance

Jeannie Vogel - MLCC Director of Communications

Kerry Krone - MLCC Business Manager

Kristin Beltzer - MLCC Chair

Marie Chantal-Dalese - President and CEO, Chateau Chantal

Dakota Baker - Deputy Chief of Staff, State Senator John Damoose



ALLIANCE GATHERS AT NORTHWEST MICHIGAN HOUSING SUMMIT



Several Alliance members attended the annual Northwest Michigan Housing Summit at the Park Place Hotel in Traverse City. This annual event is presented by Housing North and its partners.

Every year, regional housing partners work to offer an event that helps expand opportunities for networking, discussions, and exchanges with partners and supporters on housing solutions for communities in northern Michigan.

The event featured several updates and presentations highlighting solutions and tools for housing being used in the region.

Caitlyn Stark, Yarrow Brown (Housing North), Tracy Davis (Housing North), Michelle Barefoot, Marc Miller, Stacie Bytwork, Nikki Devitt, Henry Wolf, and Warren Call

2024 NORTHERN MICHIGAN POLICY CONFERENCE



The Annual Northern Michigan Policy Conference will be held at Grand Traverse Resort on Friday, January 19. Registration and lunch begin at 11 a.m., with conference presentations starting at noon.

The conference will again feature the Alliance legislative update, followed by state and federal officials' remarks, the Northern Caucus panel discussion, and a keynote address from a confirmed special guest to be announced in January.

Confirmed guests include Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson, Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity Director Susan Corbin, Michigan State Housing Development Authority Director Amy Hovey, Office of High-Speed Internet Chief Connectivity Officer Eric Frederick, Office of Rural Prosperity Director Sarah Lucas, State Senators Jon Bumstead, John Damoose and Michele Hoytenga, and State Representatives Tom Kunse, Curt VanderWall, Betsy Coffia, John Roth, Cam Cavitt, Neil Friske and Jenn Hill.

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EARLY BIRD PRICING AVAILABLE THROUGH DECEMBER 31

ALLIANCE MEMBERS

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Nonprofit corporations and independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association



CHARLEVOIX STATE OF THE COMMUNITY

At the annual Charlevoix State of the Community luncheon, NMCA Director of Government Relations Henry Wolf delivered a presentation highlighting the numerous achievements of the Alliance throughout the year.

The State of the Community luncheon allows attendees to learn from community leaders about their successes and upcoming initiatives



Henry Wolf presents at the Charlevoix luncheon.

RURAL READINESS GRANT PROGRAM AWARDS

The Office of Rural Prosperity (ORP) awarded 21 grants totaling more than \$1 million in September through its Rural Readiness Grant Program to support pre-development activities to expedite housing production, infrastructure improvements, and bolster rural economies.

ORP received over 90 requests totaling more than \$4.3 million. Nearly a third of total requests focused on projects to expedite housing production in rural communities – a top rural priority. In response to significant demand for housing support, the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) provided a grant to ORD to advance additional housing-related projects in alignment with the Statewide Housing Plan. This additional investment brought total awards to just over \$1 million.

“Economic success in rural Michigan requires communities to plan and collaborate with partners for new projects, grants, and investment – and many communities lack the organizational capacity to engage in that kind of planning,” said Sarah Lucas, ORP director. “As a new resource for Michigan, we are thrilled to be able to support those activities. With ORP funding and in partnership with MSHDA, we’re able to fund projects that prepare communities for the kinds of investment that will address priorities around housing, industry, infrastructure, and other community goals.”

Twelve grant recipients were from northern Michigan, resulting in over \$600,000 in funding, primarily for housing development.

Round Two grant recipients will be announced in mid-December.

MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF CHAMBER PROFESSIONALS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Alliance members traveled to Traverse City for the MACP Annual Conference, which offers a prime opportunity to learn about new strategies and initiatives from chambers across the state and to applaud chamber achievements in 2023.



Caitlyn Stark

As Michigan’s most significant chamber professional gathering, this event features a packed schedule that includes chamber updates from around the state,

advocacy discussions, networking opportunities, and group social activities.

Special thanks to Nikki Devitt from Petoskey and Carmen Kott from Manistee for representing your home chamber and the NMCA on the program committee!



Henry Wolf

ALLIANCE PARTNER APPOINTED TO RURAL DEVELOPMENT FUND BOARD

Lake Superior Community Partnership CEO Christopher Germain was appointed by Gov. Whitmer to serve on the Rural Development Fund Board in November.

The Rural Development Fund Board, housed in the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, oversees the Rural Development Fund. The Board is charged with advising the Department on how to distribute tax revenue collected from mines to improve and strengthen local communities.



Christopher Germain

Christopher is appointed to represent the Upper Peninsula for a term commencing November 2, 2023, and expiring December 31, 2026.

Congratulations, Christopher!